

Main Identity

From: "Chuck Schoenfeldt" <surplussales@earthlink.net>
To: "USDA" <foodsafetytechnology@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2002 3:49 PM
Subject: Food Safety
US Department of Agriculture
Livestock and Seed Programs
Agriculture Marketing Service
Stop 0249 Room 2082-S
Washington, DC 20250-0249
FAX 202 720 3499

Sirs/Madams:

Food safety is like Apple Pie and motherhood, everyone likes it.

Radiation is a proven technology, but by no means the only one.

Whatever rules you propose or adopt, be sure to allow for other proven technologies:

- 1) Thermal treating, post packaging pastuerization by quickly heating and cooling.
- 2) High Pressure Post Pastuerization, by putting products under extreme high pressure, which is a proven way of killing all the pathogens, and greatly prolonging shelf life of food products.

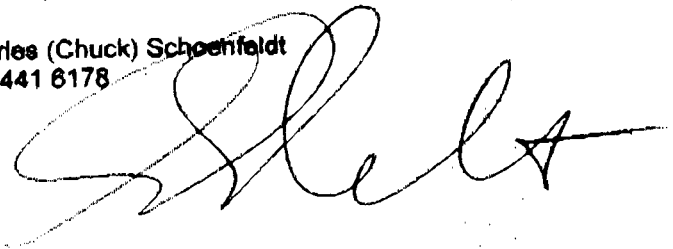
Different products require different treatments.

I represent 2 different companies who sell equipment for each of these methodologies, and we can both demonstrate the methods and validate them in a scientifically designed study.

I would be willing to discuss both of these proven methods to reduce pathogens with anyone.

Sincerely,

Charles (Chuck) Schoenfeldt
847 441 6178



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Friday, December 01, 2000

Processor links with packer

Technique preserves quality

By Mike Boyer
The Cincinnati Enquirer

Sam Huttenbauer's 10-year effort to commercialize high-pressure food processing in the United States is starting to bear fruit.

The Cincinnati entrepreneur's small company, High Pressure Research Inc., has formed a joint venture with DiMare Co., one of the nation's largest growers and packers of fresh fruit and vegetables, to produce pressure-treated diced tomatoes for the food service market by late next year.

"I've been working on this for 10 years, but this is just the tip of the iceberg," said Mr. Huttenbauer, 69, former president of a once-prominent Cincinnati meatpacking company.

He's working to establish similar joint ventures with processors for products as diverse as lunch meat and hot dogs, shrimp and oysters, pasta salad and pineapple.

"The beauty of this process is that it kills disease-causing microbes such as E. coli and salmonella without preservatives or heat used in more traditional preservation techniques like freezing and canning," he said.

The idea is simple enough. The food is put in a large metal tank and pressurized at 100,000 pounds per square inch, a process that literally squashes disease-causing microbes.

"We're always looking for ways to provide better quality products to our customers with fewer problems and longer shelf life," said Thomas F. DiMare, president of DiMare Co.,



Sam Huttenbauer Jr. in 1996 with pure products from a food business he was establishing. (Enquirer file photo)
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Survey



the California-based packing company working with Mr. Huttenbauer.

Another advantage is that the process is all-natural with no chemicals involved, he said.

Mr. DiMare, whose firm handles about 20 million cartons of produce annually, said he got interested in the process about a year ago when Mr. Huttenbauer gave him a bag of pressure-treated diced tomatoes.

"It sat on my desk for three months with no decay or bacteria developing," he said. "Of course you wouldn't keep a produce for three months but it kind of set out the parameters."

The process also doesn't diminish the flavor or the nutrients in the food and extends its shelf life for months.

While the idea sounds radical, it's not new. A West Coast company has been marketing pressurized guacamole, which can discolor quickly, for some time.

The process has been kicking around since the late 19th century when a scientist at a West Virginia university began processing fruits and dairy products under pressure.

Mr. Huttenbauer said one of the barriers to the technology has been finding metals strong enough to withstand the constant pressure cycles needed to process large amounts of food. Mr. Huttenbauer has been working with Dr. Daniel Farkas, an Oregon State University scientist who has been researching the process since the 1980s, and Dr. Joseph Kapp, an Albany, N.Y. metallurgist, to refine his patented equipment.

Mr. Huttenbauer thinks his process has an advantage over competitors because it permits faster cycling of the food through the process.

Since High Pressure has begun testing its process at a small pilot plant in Corvallis, Ore. a couple of years ago, it has reduced the cost of pressurizing food from about 25 cents a pound to 3-5 cents a pound, Mr. Huttenbauer said.

For the joint venture with DiMare, a larger tank capable of processing 40,000 pounds a day is being fabricated at a division of Krupp Steel in Germany.

That equipment will be ready in eight months, he said.

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ENQUIRER BUSINESS COVERAGE

Pressure may preserve food in future

Tuesday, September 8, 1998

BY MIKE BOYER
The Cincinnati Enquirer

Sure, you've heard of pressed duck and mashed potatoes, but how about squashed guacamole or squeezed salsa?

Those and other products could soon be headed to a supermarket or restaurant near you some day due to the efforts of Cincinnati entrepreneur Samuel J. Huttenbauer Jr.

High Pressure Research Inc., a company created by Mr. Huttenbauer seven years ago, is leading efforts to commercialize high-pressure processing in the United States to preserve perishable foods instead of canning, freezing or refrigerating.

Putting food under high pressure of up to 100,000 pounds a square inch literally squashes disease-causing microbes such as E. coli and salmonella. The process doesn't alter the food - in some cases, such as fruit juices, it actually enhances the flavor, Mr. Huttenbauer said.

Dr. Daniel Farkas, a scientist at Oregon State University in Corvallis, who has been studying the process since the early 1980s, said, "The high pressure kills the microbes that spoil the food, but does not alter the food's flavor, appearance, consistency or nutritional value."

High Pressure, which initially has set up operations at a food processing incubator at Oregon State, expects to begin pressurizing the first commercial products -- probably salsa and guacamole -- for an East Coast grocery chain later this year.

Products like guacamole "are a natural," said Dr. Farkas, who is a consultant to Mr. Huttenbauer's company. "Right now, it only has a shelf life of about seven days, but with pressure, we can extend the shelf life 30 to 60 days without it darkening or losing its fresh taste."

Through Oregon State, High Pressure Research has also

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received a contract from the U.S. Army to prepare 2,000 portions of such foods as Spanish rice and three other ready-to-eat meals for the Army. In testing, the Army has kept Spanish rice that's still edible after two years, Mr. Huttenbauer said.

Mr. Huttenbauer's company is also exploring pressurizing other foods, such as seafood, yogurt, fruit juices and hamburger. Once the foods are pressurized, they can be refrigerated or stored like other shelf-stable products.

Pressurizing food is totally safe, Mr. Huttenbauer said. The Food and Drug Administration has been monitoring development of process.

Mr. Huttenbauer, 66, is the former president of E. Huttenbauer & Sons, a once-prominent Cincinnati meatpacking company that closed in 1996 in the midst of a legal dispute over a meat-supply contract with the Army. That dispute is still pending in federal court, but Mr. Huttenbauer declined to discuss it.

"I'm interested in the positive," he said.

A self-described "technology nut," Mr. Huttenbauer said he's been exploring various means of preserving food for more than a decade.

"I was looking for a better way of making shelf stable and sterilized food," he said of his interest in high pressure processing.

He owns another company, American Nutraceuticals, which from small offices at the Greenhills Shopping Plaza, provides a line of pureed fresh foods molded to their original appearance for people with digestive disorders or other impairments.

Although pressurizing food sounds radical, Dr. Farkas said the process has been kicking around since the late 19th century when Bert Hite, a researcher at the University of West Virginia, began processing fruits and dairy products.

But the process was "pretty well forgotten" until the 1980s when he began his research and some Japanese companies began pressurizing fruit juices and jams, he said.

Initially, the problem was finding metal tanks strong enough to withstand the constant pressure cycles needed to process large amounts of food. But more advanced metallurgy and the use of water-filled chambers to increase the pressure have overcome those hurdles. The next hurdle is building tanks large enough to process larger volumes of food.

High Pressure Research's 20-foot tank at Oregon State can only process about 8,000 pounds of food a day, but Mr. Huttenbauer said he soon hopes to have tanks capable of processing up to 40,000 pounds daily.

Larger tanks will also drive down the cost. Right now, it costs High Pressure about 25 cents a pound to preserve food.

"We need to get it to around 3 cents a pound to be competitive with other types of food preservation such as canning and freezing," Mr. Huttenbauer said.

He said his company hopes to commercialize the process by providing the technology and setting up plants for other food processors, processing foods under contract to other companies and eventually processing foods under its own label.

At some point, Mr. Huttenbauer, who declines to say how much he's invested in the business, said he hopes to establish processing operations in Cincinnati.

In the meantime, he said, "there's a tremendous amount of interest worldwide. I can't tell you the number of calls I've received" since word of High Pressure Research's efforts has spread.

Down the road, Mr. Huttenbauer said, "What I'm looking at is the ability to take whole meals and keep them fresh for the home-meal replacement market. . . . The size of the market is gigantic."

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